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HOUSE MEMORIAL 8

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2008

INTRODUCED BY

Al Park

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT TO
EMPLOY THE MISSOURI MODEL OF JUVENILE INCARCERATION AT THE J.
PAUL TAYLOR CENTER IN DONA ANA COUNTY.

WHEREAS, New Mexico, like all states, works diligently but
not always successfully, to rehabilitate young criminal
offenders, especially those who commit nonviolent crimes; and

WHEREAS, it is both cost-effective and morally right to
devote as much time, energy, money and other resources into
redirecting young offenders' behavior to more productive paths;
and

WHEREAS, while it is important for the public safety that
certain young offenders be physically separated from the public
and punished for their crimes, it is equally important that the
vast majority of young offenders be given every opportunity to

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1 address and correct the issues in their lives that contribute
2 to their behavior; and

3 WHEREAS, Missouri's juvenile justice system is recognized
4 across the country as a model for low recidivism rates and
5 successful outcomes for youthful offenders; and

6 WHEREAS, the Missouri model relies on small facilities and
7 intensive group counseling and operates on the premise that
8 children are much more significantly influenced by peer
9 pressure than they are by adult direction and punishment; and

10 WHEREAS, the Missouri model creates peer groups of
11 juvenile offenders that gradually assume responsibility for the
12 behavior of each member in the group; and

13 WHEREAS, professional case managers, group therapy, family
14 counseling and transition services for all children coming out
15 of secure care are an integral part of the model; and

16 WHEREAS, New Mexico could benefit from employing the
17 Missouri model of juvenile justice and studying its results;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
19 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children,
20 youth and families department be requested to implement the
21 Missouri model of juvenile justice at the J. Paul Taylor center
22 in Dona Ana county and regularly report to the governor and the
23 legislature on the impact of that transition; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the secretary of children, youth and families.

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